

7-7-1878

Letter from Anne Whitney, Belmont, Massachusetts, to Maria Weston Chapman, 1878 July 7

Anne Whitney

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still. this might not be
until next Oct. & least
effort to wait all summer.

I have been thinking
that you might be helped
by a suggestion from some
slight knowledge I have
of the manner of conducting
art. affairs. When an
individual comes forward
with an idea for a public
statue - as for instance,
Mr. Appleton with his
plan for a rose
monument - he is likely
to have ^{previously} associated with
his own a number of
names tolerably well known
on which he thinks will
be influential, & these
together form the
commission.

Belmont. July 7. 1878.

Dear Friend -

I was not
thinking in representing
Harriet Martineau, to
introduce her dress.
I much dislike this
feature of the picture
in the 1st vol.

And yet theoretically
something may be said
for the principle of
rendering in a portrait, an
infirmary of which the
subject through a life-
time had gone "to swell
the man's amount."

On the other

hard whatever misfortune
whether blindness, deafness,
lunaticism, or other, it
may take its place in
the general train of
circumstances which has
helped to evolve human
power. & be let go at
that. We are interested
in the result in feature
& bearing & take all the
rest for granted. Art-
does not bother with
analogies — In short
it is a point I should
be willing to concede either
way, & partly on the ground
that what is well done —
artistically speaking — justifies
the doing.

As regards bronze
I can tell you little or
nothing. I knew a good
workman in Paris to whom
I should be willing to
entrust anything. It is
however, far better to have
work done here if it can
be done equally well.
This is a matter to be
inquired into.

It has not been
possible, these last two
weeks to work in any other
but I hope before long
to begin this great study.
Ah — how I fear to
disappoint you! I would
rather begin when the
weather promises permanent
continuance in the work.

To you before long. 178

Please remember
me kindly to your household.
I am glad of these cool
winds for all who suffer
in sick-rooms.

I trust that
Medallion by Foley
will turn up, but much
fear it was destroyed.

Always yours truly

Anne Dobson

My name is not written
in the book.

You alone, as a
Commissioner, are not
more self-constituted
than he & they.

But it seems to me
if you can procure
the names of two or
three well-known
English men & women
you will have no
difficulty with respect
to cooperation on this
side - & your enterprise
will have more swing
& chance for rapid
success.

Still I do not know
what you have in mind -
what ideas & resources -
a man. & everybody
works most happily
in his own way.

This has occurred to
me as a method of
relieving you of ^{some of} the ~~whole~~
weight of the affair -
& of private & public
responsibility in some
degree.

The printed
article for Lent is very
curious as confirming
what you said of

the meaning attached
to mesmerism - though
it still seems incredible
in spite of the plain
inference that any
man - held to be - of
decency - could have
intended that meaning
in a public allusion
to his sister. One
would rather believe
that he has lived, in
the retirement of his
study, innocent of the
knowledge that such
gross means ~~attached~~
to the term.

I will return the paper